

TELEGRAM
(Secret Cipher V)

Tokyo, 6 November 1941, 10:50 P.M.
Arrived, 7 November 1941, 17:50 o'clock

No. 2354 of 6/12

Most Urgent!

Secret!

Foreign Minister Tōgō, to whom I have spoken about the sudden dispatch of Ambassador Kurusu to Washington, explained to me that Ambassador Admiral Nomura had asked for the dispatch of an experienced professional diplomat to support him in the present difficult situation. In the press and world publicity optimistic comments have been made in connection with this dispatch. He does not share this optimism, because the differences of opinion between Japan and the United States are very great. He regretted that he could not inform me of the details of the Kurusu instructions now. But he wanted to sum up his personal guesses as to the future in this way, that an intensification of the cooperation with Germany and Italy could soon become necessary.

I replied to the Foreign Minister that Ambassador Kurusu must certainly have received the direction also to express the warning which the Japanese Government had in view against Roosevelt's going further upon the way of aggression. Tōgō declared upon this that he had examined the matter in the meantime and confirmed that the delivery of the declaration contained in the speech prepared by his predecessor had been given up. (7 groups mutilated or failed, correction is asked) he had taken notice of the German desire, but he had to take into account the general situation at the moment. More important than a mere warning addressed to America, the effect of which seemed doubtful to him, would be a firm attitude of Japan, and this attitude is expressed also in the instructions to Kurusu. Strict limits are set to him, so much he could tell me, for his negotiations in the United States, which he could not overstep.

The dispatching of Kurusu has been decided only recently, as I learned confidentially and as is proved also by his overhasty departure. In the long-drawn-out discussions in the Cabinet, about which I have reported, an idea prevailed that what is designated as the last attempt should be made for a peaceful agreement with the United States. The proponents of the understanding have certainly in mind to gain time, even if little time, by doing so, and to win a moment of rest for the coming session of the Diet.

The acceptance of the mission by Kurusu suggests that he has not regarded this undertaking as altogether hopeless, even if the instructions contained restrictions on the negotiations in substance (above all on the China question) and also in time. The fact that the Privy Council met, with the Emperor presiding, for a twenty-minutes session before his dispatch further shows that the Government had a need to protect itself. That the press brought out the fact that Kurusu had played apparently an important role in the conclusion of the Tripartite Pact, is also indicative in this direction. As the Army and the Navy would hardly be, as heretofore, in a position to accept demands presented by the United States regarding China, I should like to judge the chances for these important gestures also to be doubtful.

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Translation Certificate

I, Matsumoto Kaoru, of the defense, hereby certify that I am conversant with the English and Japanese languages and that the foregoing is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, a correct translation of the original document.

Matsumoto Kaoru (seal)

Tokyo
2 February 1948

C E R T I F I C A T E
O F O R I G I N

I, Yale Maxon, Chief of the Document Division, IPS, hereby certify:

1. That I am Chief of the Document Division of the International Prosecution Section, GHQ, SCAP, and as such have possession, custody, and control of originals or copies of all documents obtained by the said Section.

2. That frames 60819, 60820, 60821, being 3 sheets of a photostatic copy of a telegram from Ambassador Ott, dated 6 Nov. 1941 and contained in IPS Document 4072, were received by the IPS from the Office of the Chief of Counsel of the Nurenburg War Crimes Trials.

/s/ Yale Maxon